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Viewing cable 06MANAGUA2338, UCA PRESIDENTIAL POLL -- A PACT PLAY ON THE

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06MANAGUA2338**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MANAGUA2338	2006-10-20 21:29	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4041/millones-de-dolares-sin-control-y-a-discrecion>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4040/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-venezuela-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4047/rodrigo-barreto-enviado-de-ldquo-vacaciones-rdquo>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0793
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 002338

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/20/2016
TAGS: [EAID](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: UCA PRESIDENTIAL POLL -- A PACT PLAY ON THE
NUMBERS?

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: The University of Central America (UCA) released a poll October 18 showing Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) presidential candidate Daniel Ortega with a clear lead followed at a distant second by Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC) candidate Jose Rizo as part of its "Electoral Forum," a series also supported by "El Nuevo Diario," Channel 10, Radio Tiempo, the Chamber of Commerce (CACONIC) and the Danish government. The poll was conducted by UCA students using mock ballots and covered all departments, including urban and semi-rural, but not rural, areas. The poll was released during a live broadcast on FSLN/PLC-leaning Channel 10. After the release of the poll, several of the survey's "supporters" have distanced themselves from the results and an Embassy contact claims that the numbers were manipulated. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) The poll, conducted by UCA students, included 15,330 mock ballots for president and 15,263 ballots for national deputies. The poll covered all 15 departments plus the 2 autonomous regions on the Atlantic Coast. Certain municipalities were selected from each department; however, no clear explanation was given as to the rationale behind the choices. According to the poll, Ortega would win 37.50% of the vote, followed at a distant second by Rizo (20.11%), Montealegre (17.31%), Jarquin (12.90%) and Pastora (1.00%). On the department level, according to the poll, the FSLN would win Masaya, Managua, the RAAS, the RAAN, Esteli, Madriz, Rio San Juan, Jinotega and Leon. The PLC was strongest in Matagalpa, Chontales and Nueva Segovia. The ALN would win Rivas, Granada, Chinandega, and Boaco, whereas the MRS would win Carazo. According to the UCA team's calculations, the 20 national-level National Assembly deputies would be distributed in the following manner: FSLN 9, PLC 5, ALN 3, MRS 3 (department level Assembly deputies were not included in the poll).

13. (SBU) Press coverage of the poll has focused on the possibility of an Ortega victory in the first round and the assertion that Rizo is the only candidate who can beat him, especially if the rural vote is factored in (the PLC claims a strong base in rural areas). During the live broadcast on Channel 10, the presenters emphasized the fact that the rural areas were not included in the poll.

14. (C) Several of the supporters of the "Electoral Forum" -- a series of 10 televised events, ranging from discussions of key election issues to smaller opinion surveys -- have distanced themselves from the poll. Chamber of Commerce

(CACONIC) president Jose Adan Aguerri told the press that CACONIC was not involved in the survey and "neither endorses or disqualifies it." The Danish Ambassador also expressed concern to the DCM that the government of Denmark was being linked to the poll.

15. (C) COMMENT: There are reasons to believe that the poll results were manipulated, to advance the interests of the FSLN-PLC pact, to show that Ortega can win without fraud on a first round and that Rizo is the only hope to defeat him. Indeed, television interviews on October 19 highlighted Rizo's claim that the poll demonstrates that he is the only candidate who can beat Ortega and therefore Montealegre should resign, while Ortega running mate Jaime Morales is claiming that the poll shows that the FSLN will enjoy a clean win on the first round. The poll was fielded by UCA's FSLN-leaning Law School (UCA Law School Dean Manuel Arauz, was on the podium). A driving force behind the poll is Channel 10 journalist Jaime Arellano, who supports the PLC and has been attempting for months to find a way to convince Nicaraguans that Rizo is the only viable option to beat Ortega (claiming the PLC has the machinery and the ability to "defend" the vote) and to pressure Montealegre and Jarquin to withdraw from the race to support the PLC. Channel 10 investors include the FSLN and Angel Gonzalez, who also partially owns FSLN channel 4 and is reportedly the one funding PLC/Rizo's recent media blitz. Channel 10 recently blocked the airing of UNIVISION's (Channel 10 has rights to UNIVISION programming in Nicaragua) interview of Ortega stepdaughter Zoilamerica Narvaez.

16. (C) The reactions of the student audience during the broadcast were telling. They showed apparent surprise at the results, with several students commenting that they do not believe the numbers. Audible groans were heard in the audience (mainly students and media) when the estimated

numbers and names of the national deputies were announced (especially PLC deputy candidate Maria Dolores Aleman). Another student said "Ya viene la guerra" ("here comes the war") when the FSLN was announced as the clear winner.

17. (C) A POL FSN heard from a contact (an UCA student who worked on the poll) the day before the poll was released, that Montealegre was leading, slightly ahead of Ortega. The student also told the FSN that she feared that the poll results would be "manipulated." The student tried to find written information to support her assertion and was unable to, but noted that a number of other students reject the results and some might be willing to talk to us. The student has subsequently reported that she and a number of other students have been told by Dean Manuel Arauz that they are forbidden to discuss the poll.

18. (C) A "La Prensa" reporter is working on a piece on the possible manipulation of the results. Post and many knowledgeable contacts have noted that UCA is not a professional polling organization and that the results are not consistent with any of the other polls conducted by CID-Gallup, Borges y Asociados and M&R. UCA also conducted polls in 2000 that were inaccurate and possibly also the result of manipulation. New poll results from CID-Gallup and M&R are expected to be released in the next few days. END COMMENT.
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